

Statement on Senate Passage of Appropriations Legislation for Afghanistan, Iraq, and the War on Terror

April 21, 2005

I applaud the Senate for its strong bipartisan support for our troops and our continued effort to win the war on terror. New democracies are taking root in Iraq and Afghanistan, and America is proud to stand with them. Both countries are assuming greater responsibility for their own security,

which will help our troops return home as quickly as possible with the honor they have earned. I urge the House and Senate to reach a final agreement that focuses taxpayer dollars on providing the tools our troops and diplomats need now, so that I can sign a bill into law as soon as possible.

Remarks on the Nomination of General Peter Pace To Be Chairman and Admiral Edmund P. Giambastiani, Jr., To Be Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

April 22, 2005

The President. Good morning. As President, my most solemn duty is protecting the American people. In meeting this responsibility, one of the most important decisions I make is the appointment of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Today I'm pleased to announce my decision to nominate General Peter Pace to take on this vital job.

When confirmed by the Senate, General Pete Pace will be the first marine in history to hold this vital position. He knows the job well. For the past 3½ years, he has served under our superb Secretary of Defense, Don Rumsfeld. He has been the Deputy to one of the most outstanding Chairmen our Nation has ever had, General Richard Myers.

As my most senior military adviser, General Myers has helped prepare military forces so they can meet the threats of this new century. This is a huge task, even in peacetime. Dick Myers did it while defending America from one of the most determined and vicious enemies we have ever faced. On General Myers's watch, we toppled two brutal dictatorships in Afghanistan and Iraq and liberated more than 50 mil-

lion people. By removing the Taliban and Saddam Hussein, we have made America safer and put a troubled region on the path to freedom and peace.

I want to thank General Dick Myers for his able service over four decades and his tireless dedication to duty and country. And I also thank his wife, Mary Jo. Dick Myers has had four jobs with four stars, but the distinction that he is proudest of is not a military one. Last year, the National Father's Day Council named him Father of the Year.

I'm confident that the great work that General Dick Myers set in motion at the Pentagon will continue under the leadership of General Pete Pace. The first thing America needs to know about Pete Pace is that he is a marine. To the American people, marine is shorthand for "can do." And I'm counting on Pete Pace to bring the Marine spirit to these new responsibilities.

General Pete Pace's life is the story of the American Dream. His father was an immigrant from Italy. Pete Pace was born in Brooklyn. He grew up in New Jersey, and he graduated from the U.S. Naval

Academy. He was a rifle platoon leader in Vietnam. He commanded marines in Somalia, and he went on to command U.S. Marine forces in the Atlantic and became the head of the U.S. Southern Command. It tells you something about Pete Pace's devotion to his troops that under the glass on his desk at the Pentagon, he keeps a photo of Lance Corporal Guido Farinaro. He was the first marine he lost in combat in Vietnam.

I've come to rely on Pete Pace's wisdom, judgment, and sense of humor. I will continue to rely on those qualities as he serves our Nation as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. We'll need his wisdom and determination as we continue to transform our Armed Forces so we can defeat today's enemies while preparing ourselves for military challenges we will face as this new century unfolds.

General Pete Pace also understands the critical role military families play in the success of our Armed Forces. That's because he has a great military family himself. I'm pleased to welcome his wife, Lynne, and daughter, Tiffany, who have joined us today. They're proud of Pete, and they should be.

Because he has served in the job, General Pete Pace also understands the important role that the Vice Chairman plays. Today I am pleased to announce that I have nominated an outstanding military officer, Admiral Ed Giambastiani. *[Laughter]* He shall be known as Admiral G. *[Laughter]* Anyway, he's going to be the Vice Chairman. *[Laughter]*

For the past 2½ years, Admiral G, as his friends and now the President calls him—*[laughter]*—has been serving our Nation while wearing two important hats. As

Commander of the U.S. Joint Forces Command in Norfolk, he has been transforming our Armed Forces so they can better work together to defeat the threats of the 21st century. As the first Supreme Allied Commander for Transformation, he's been leading the effort to bring reform to NATO military so our Alliance is prepared for the threats of tomorrow.

Admiral G is joined today by his wife, Cindy, daughter, Cathy, and his son, Pete, a Navy lieutenant, and Pete's wife, Jennifer.

I appreciate the willingness of these men and their families to take on these new assignments in an extraordinary moment in our Nation's history. We still face ruthless adversaries who wish to attack our country. With the leadership of men like these, the outcome of the struggle is assured: America will defeat freedom's enemies and ensure the security of our country for generations to come.

It's my honor to bring to the podium General Pete Pace.

[At this point, Chairman-designate Pace made brief remarks.]

The President. Thanks for bailing me out. *[Laughter]*

[Chairman-designate Pace continued his remarks, and then Vice Chairman-designate Giambastiani made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:12 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Chairman-designate Pace and Vice Chairman-designate Giambastiani.

Remarks on Earth Day in Knoxville, Tennessee April 22, 2005

It's great to be back in the State of Tennessee—I'm sorry we're not at the Great Smoky National Park. Senator Lamar Alexander has been urging me to come to the park and see the great beauty of a part of the world where he was raised. I'm proud to be traveling with Senator Bill Frist, the great majority leader of the United States Senate from the State of Tennessee, and Lamar Alexander. The thing about old Lamar is he's constantly reminding me that without Tennessee, Texas wouldn't be much. *[Laughter]*

I appreciate traveling with Congressman Jimmy Duncan, the Congressman from this district. I remember all too well going to the Duncan family picnic that he gave. Evidently, he's got a pretty good-sized family, since there was about 15,000 people there. *[Laughter]* I'm proud to be with Bill Jenkins, from east Tennessee, and Zach Wamp, Congressman Wamp. We had a good visit on the airplane, talking about issues that are important to Tennessee and our country. It's an honor to work with these fine leaders as we work to protect our country and secure our country and enhance the prosperity of our country.

I'm traveling as well with the Secretary of the Interior, Gale Norton—one of her jobs is to oversee the national parks of our country—as well as Acting Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, Steve Johnson. I picked Steve to head the EPA. I did so because, like me and like the folks serving in Congress here, we care about our environment. He also comes from the ranks of the EPA. He knows the Agency. He knows how to work with local folks to get things done. And I urge the Senate to confirm him as quickly as possible.

Before I begin, it was an honor to meet Pat Summitt, basketball coach of the Lady Vols. I told her I was heading down to

Crawford, which is right next door to Baylor. And she said, "Well, make sure you say hello to one of my pupils," a person she coached, Kim Mulkey-Roberts. So I'm going to do that. If you're watching TV, Kim, Pat sends her best. What an honorable woman Pat Summitt is, and what a great role model she is for those of us who aspire to leadership.

In the park, had I been there, I would have reminded people today is Earth Day, a day in which we recommit ourselves to being good stewards of our land. We didn't create this Earth, but we have an obligation to protect it. One of the interesting things about our Nation is that since 1970, the air is cleaner, and the water is more pure, and we're using our land better, and our economy has grown a lot. My point is, it's possible to have economic growth and jobs and opportunity and, at the same time, be wise stewards of the land.

I remember traveling with Lamar down here one time, and he said, "I want you to understand, and I want you to pay attention to the ozone levels in the Smokies." And so I did a little research, and I'm proud to report, since 2000, the ozone levels have dropped. But there is more to be done to make sure the Smoky Mountains and the Smoky Mountain National Park is as beautiful as possible.

And I want to share with you too, two issues that we have worked together on that will make a difference not only to the folks here in Tennessee but around the country. First, we have finalized a rule that will cut pollution from heavy diesel engines by 90 percent. We worked with the manufacturers of those engines, and we've come up with a way to reduce pollution from diesel engines, and that's going to help a lot.

And secondly, I put forth a rule—a series of rules called the Clear Skies Initiative, which will cut air pollution from coal-fired